

Who Might I Become?

Pat Lowe, Wasatch Range Writing Project

Summary:

The picture books each show the early life of three authors, two of whom are also the illustrators of their books. The handout pages give annotated links to a variety of online resources about the authors.

Objectives:

- Students will become familiar with three different authors and illustrators.
- Students will identify ideas in the writings which have a personal connection to their own life, interests, dreams or goals.
- Students will write or draw a selection about something important in their life.

Context:

This lesson could be used during the study of writing. The lesson would be appropriate for elementary students, although it could be used with secondary students in the exploration of personal identity, interests and life goals.

Materials:

- Copies of books.
- Copies of background information pages for older students.
- Large sheets of poster paper for display in the classroom.
- Blank drawing paper, and individual student notebooks/journals.

Time Span:

The material can be presented in multiple sessions of 45 minutes each, with periods of several days between for student reflection and writing.

Procedures:

1. Read aloud the chosen picture book.
2. Discuss the strength of the individual author. Talk about what is needed to be writer or illustrator.
3. Present background information about the author. Patricia MacLaughlan said it was important to be a reader in order to be a writer. Eric Velasquez wants to influence the future by introducing ethnic models as illustrations of characters. Allen Say describes how he built on his early interest and ability in art by finding a mentor, continuing to persist and take advantage of opportunities presented to him.
4. Use interview videos available on the Internet to understand the individual author.
5. Talk about what students like to do and who they want to become. What did the author or illustrator do in real life to achieve their dreams and goals? Ideas might be recorded on chart paper posted in the classroom, or in a virtual format for future reference.
6. Have students jot down ideas and memories on a blank paper or in their journal which were prompted by something in the book or class discussion.

7. Let students draw simple pictures about their interests, dreams and goals.
8. Have them write captions for the drawings.
9. Work through the writing process to help students complete a narrative memory. It need not be a long story, but should reflect their personality.
10. As a class, orally share the small books.

Extensions:

- Older students could write several memory pieces and publish them as a collection. The format might vary from one selection to another.
- Investigate the geographic locations mentioned in the books.
- Conduct research about one of the authors, and develop a written piece to share new knowledge.

Rationale:

Young students can be encouraged in building on their interests and dreams to begin a lifelong pursuit. By knowing about the early lives of authors and illustrators, students might begin to realize how they could flourish in later years. They will communicate those aspirations in a narrative form.

Resources:

MacLachlan, Patricia. *Someone Like Me*. New York: Roaring Book Press, 2017. Print.

Say, Allen. *Drawing From Memory*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2011. Print.

Velasquez, Eric. *Grandma's Gift*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2010. Print.

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